

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-40, and insert the following new Claims 41-80, as set forth in the following listing of claims, which will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

41. (New) A method for provisioning and connecting disparate telecommunications carriers operating communication networks using disparate protocols, the method comprising the steps of:

provisioning a plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment within a common co-location site, the equipment communicating signals over different ones of communication networks belonging to respective ones of the telecommunications carriers;

switching connections between ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment using an optical switching platform; and

determining a fee to be charged to respective ones of the telecommunications carriers, based on an amount of resources consumed by the respective ones of the telecommunications carriers at the common co-location site.

42. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the switching step further comprises switching the connections using the optical switching platform configured as an entirely optical device.

43. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the switching step further comprises switching the connections using the optical switching platform configured as an electro-optical device.

44. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising exchanging bandwidth between different ones of the telecommunications carriers by routing signals using the optical switching platform.

45. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising end-to-end provisioning a telecommunication link using only resources located at the co-location facility.

46. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the switching step is performed without manually forming a connection.

47. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising generating an account status report for the respective ones of the telecommunications carriers, the report based on recorded amounts of the resources consumed.

48. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising maintaining a database reflecting status of the disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment, the status including at least one of identification of equipment, space availability, capacity, current load, and customer allocation.

49. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising automatically generating trouble reports reflecting technical problems with the disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment.

50. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising receiving communications from the telecommunications carriers concerning a quality of connection maintained by the co-location site.

51. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising initiating a connection between ones of the disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment and the optical switching platform.

52. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising terminating a connection between ones of the disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment and the optical switching platform.

53. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising collecting information concerning operation of the disparate, non-homogenous equipment located at the co-location site.

54. (New) The method of Claim 53, wherein the collecting step further comprises collecting data in accordance with Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) from network devices within the co-location site.

55. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising automatically translating between different communication protocols during the switching step, using the optical switching platform.

56. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising connecting ones of the communications networks to a data storage facility via the optical switching platform.

57. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the switching step further comprises switching the connections, wherein the telecommunication carriers include an IXC, a CLEC, and an ISP.

58. (New) The method of Claim 41, wherein the provisioning step further comprising provisioning the telecommunications equipment comprising a server farm.

59. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising offering a network Service Level Agreement to the telecommunications carriers.

60. (New) The method of Claim 41, further comprising aggregating bandwidth from the communication networks, and selling the bandwidth to third party buyers.

61. (New) A co-located telecommunications system, comprising:
at least one co-location site containing a plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment, the equipment communicating signals over different ones of communication networks belonging to respective ones of disparate telecommunications carriers;
an optical switching platform connected to the equipment, the platform adapted for switching connections between ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment; and
a computer operatively associated with the equipment, adapted for determining a fee to be charged to respective ones of the telecommunications carriers based on an amount of resources consumed by the respective ones of the telecommunications carriers at the co-location site.
62. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the optical switching platform further comprises an entirely optical device.
63. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the optical switching platform further comprises an electro-optical device.
64. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the optical switching platform is further configured for exchanging bandwidth between different ones of the telecommunications carriers by routing signals.
65. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising at least one end-to-end telecommunication link provisioned using only resources located at the co-location facility.
66. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the optical switching platform is configured to switch the connections without manually forming a connection.

67. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising a software module operatively associated to the equipment, the software module adapted for generating an account status report for the respective ones of the telecommunications carriers, the report based on recorded amounts of co-location site resources consumed.

68. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising a database operatively associated with the equipment, the database containing information concerning the equipment, including at least one of identification of equipment, space availability, capacity, current load, and customer allocation.

69. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising a management information system (MIS) module operatively associated with the equipment, adapted to collect information on operation of the ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment and report to the disparate telecommunications carriers based on the collected information.

70. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising a customer service module operatively associated with the equipment, adapted to communicate with the disparate telecommunications carriers regarding ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment.

71. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising an engineering module operatively associated with the equipment, adapted to manage provisioning of the ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment in response to communications with the disparate telecommunications carriers.

72. (New) The system of Claim 71, wherein the engineering module monitors trouble reports reflecting technical problems with the ones of the plurality of disparate, non-homogenous telecommunications equipment.

73. (New) The system of Claim 71, wherein the engineering module collects information concerning operation of the disparate, non-homogenous equipment located at the co-location site.

74. (New) The system of Claim 73, wherein the engineering module collects the information in accordance with Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP).

75. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the optical switching platform is configured for automatically translating between different communication protocols while switching the connections.

76. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising connecting ones of the communications networks to a data storage facility via the optical switching platform.

77. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the telecommunication carriers include an IXC, a CLEC, and an ISP.

78. (New) The system of Claim 61, wherein the telecommunications equipment comprises a server farm.

79. (New) The system of Claim 70, wherein the customer service module further includes software for offering a network Service Level Agreement to the telecommunications carriers.

80. (New) The system of Claim 61, further comprising a software module operatively associated with the optical switching platform, the software module adapted for aggregating bandwidth from the communication networks, and selling the bandwidth to third party buyers.